during the 10th Five Year Plan" to provide incentive to new approved hotel projects in 1 to 3 star category hotels all over the country except in the four metropolitan cities.

Facilities to small and marginal farmers

1435. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the various facilities available to the small and marginal farmers in different States from different banks;

(b) whether there are any common criteria to decide the eligibility for loans; and

(c) the details of steps RBI proposed to protect the banks and the farmers in case of drought, flood, under death of live stock and failure of crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Small and marginal farmers in the country form part of weaker sections under the priority sector. A target of 10% of the net bank credit has been stipulated for lending by domestic scheduled commercial banks to the weaker sections. With a view to increasing the flow of credit to small and marginal farmers, several measures have been taken including the following:

1. Banks have been advised to waive margin/security requirements for agricultural loans up to Rs. 50,000/-;
2. Banks should not compound interest on current dues in respect of long duration crop loans and instalments not falling due in respect of term loans;
3. Total interest debited to the accounts of small and marginal farmers should not exceed the principal amount in respect of short term advances;
4. One Time Settlement (OTS) Scheme for small and marginal farmers who have been declared as defaulters and have become ineligible for fresh credit.

(b) RBI has not fixed any common criteria to decide the eligibility for loans. Banks take decision in the matter on the basis of their commercial judgement.

(c) RBI had issued standing guidelines to banks for providing relief in areas affected by natural calamities with a view to allowing greater discretion to banks to decide upon the quantum of relief assistance to be provided to the affected farmers. These guidelines permit banks to convert/reschedule loans in the event of natural calamity for periods ranging from 3 to 9 years depending upon the successive crop failure/ intensity of damage to crops, grant fresh crop loans to affected farmers, convert principal as well as interest due on the existing loans, not to compound interest in respect of loans converted/rescheduled, relaxations in security and margin norms, etc. consequent on the announcement made by the Government on 18.6.2004 to double the flow of agricultural loans in the next three years, RBI has issued guidelines to banks to implement the package which *inter-alia* provides for debt restructuring/ rescheduling and fresh loan to farmers, affected by natural calamities.

Tourists visiting Rajasthan and Punjab

1436. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of foreign and domestic tourists visiting Rajasthan and Punjab has fallen drastically during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise; and

(c) whether Government propose to rescue the fading tourist situation in Rajasthan by introducing new plans and incentives to revive tourism in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) On the basis of information received from the State Governments, the number of visits